



OrganicFarmNZ

Operational Guidelines

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Abbreviations and definitions

- ORGANIC FARM NZ Small scale Producers Organic Programme
- Pod (producer group)
- MAF Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
- NCC National Coordinating Committee (of Organic Farm NZ)
- NO National Office (of Organic Farm NZ)
- RB Regional Body (of Organic Farm NZ)

OrganicFarmNZ – Operational Guidelines

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a guide to the implementation of the OrganicFarmNZ domestic market certification process. This manual should be read in-conjunction with the OrganicFarmNZ Compliance Procedures (Standards).

A guiding concept that underpins the OrganicFarmNZ certification process is the idea that organic certification can serve as both as a tool for ensuring the organic integrity of products being sold in the NZ market place and that the certification process can provide a mechanism through which individuals can be drawn together to cooperate to enhance the overall well being of their communities.

1.1 Standards

There are two components to the Standards.

a) OrganicFarmNZ Compliance Requirements

The Compliance procedures that need to be met for certification by OrganicFarmNZ are described in the OrganicFarmNZ Compliance Procedures. The rules outlined in this document include the requirements for membership and application, farm management plans and related documentation, use of certificates and seals and meeting the various rules and conditions and timing requirements for conversion to organic and continuing practices. These requirements are unique to the OrganicFarmNZ. The equivalent document for BIOGRO is the BIOGRO NZ Module 3 Certification System.

b) The Production Rules

The Production Rules for OrganicFarmNZ are the same as BIOGRO Modules for Crops, Livestock and Orchard Production and Appendices A-D. These rules apply to all on-farm production and related management practices and the inputs used. If and where it is deemed appropriate by the National Coordinating Committee (NCC) of OrganicFarmNZ derogations and special departures to these productions rules may be made. Such derogations would be detailed as an annex to the OrganicFarmNZ Compliance Procedures and provided as separate annex to the Production Rules. Such derogations would be notified to all producers certified by OrganicFarmNZ as and when they may occur.

1.2 Documents

Listed below are the documents to be held on file by Regional Body, electronic versions of the documents are available online, or from the Regional Bodies or National Office.

- OrganicFarmNZ Operational Guidelines
- OrganicFarmNZ Compliance Procedures (Standards)
- BIOGRO Production Rules Modules 4 - 11 & Appendices A-D

Producer Application Pack that includes (above documents plus)

- Application Forms (pods) / Application Form (for individual applicants)
- Property Management Plan (group and individual) that includes Application and Land-use Declaration Form 1 and Inputs schedule.

Regional Bodies to have on file and provide when required

- Pod Peer Review Summary Sheet
- Peer Group Property Review Checklist
- Individual Property Audit Checklist
- Pod Audit Checklist
- Pod Co-ordinator's Form

2.0 The Structure of OrganicFarmNZ

There are 3 levels in the OrganicFarmNZ structure:

- National Body (National Coordinating Committee [NCC] and National Office [NO])
- Regional Body's Option 1 and Regional Body Option 2
- Producers as individual producers or as Producer Groups (Pods)

The National Body comprises of elected representatives from Regional Bodies and representation from other bodies as is appropriate. The process for the election of representatives is in the process of development. Currently representatives to the NCC have been drawn from the Regional Bodies participating in the programme.

The roles and responsibilities of the Regional Bodies will differ depending on whether they function as an Option 1 or Option 2 Regional Body (see section 2.3.3 and 2.3.4).

2.1 Responsibilities of National Co-ordinating Committee (NCC)

- Employ National Office.
- Ensure that the OrganicFarmNZ is accepted in the NZ marketplace by generic promotion of scheme and labelling.
- Ensure that the OrganicFarmNZ is available to clients and applied consistently throughout NZ.
- Arbitrate in appeals and disputes that cannot be resolved at the Regional level.
- Have the right to withdraw accreditation of Regional Body.
- Determine the Terms of Reference for Service Providers.
- Negotiate costs for Service Providers.

2.2 National Office Administration and Management

- Maintain a central (national) database for all registered members of OrganicFarmNZ to include their certification status and relevant details such as the products they are certified to sell.
- Allocate each producer a certificate number that is unique to each producer and each OrganicFarmNZ Regional Body.
- Issue certificates (as per option 1 and option 2).
- Provide relevant documentation and facilitate an annual external audit of OrganicFarmNZ systems and procedures.
- Provide a point of contact for new OrganicFarmNZ members and Regional Bodies (provide introduction and link new members to Regional Body).
- Facilitate training programmes for Regional Body auditors.
- Facilitate training of Regional Body certification and administration persons.

2.3 Regional Body Administration and Management

What is a Region?

Regions are defined loosely; they are not necessarily geographically defined but rather determined by the area which the establishing group feels comfortable managing. The idea is to have flexibility in the development of RBs that will serve to allow small groups to start small and expand, and secondly, to foster the idea of communities that feel 'naturally' linked as opposed to externally prescribed.

The minimum criteria for the implementation of the OrganicFarmNZ programme in any area are that a Regional Body be set in place to manage the OrganicFarmNZ process. The name given to this group and the formal structure adopted will vary from region to region.

There are two options for a Regional Structure.

- **Option 1** where the Regional Body takes responsibility for both the administration and certification systems and procedures. In Option 1 the Regional Body will have a management committee elected by its members. This committee will appoint an administration person and a certification manager. The committee will also appoint a certification committee of at least 2 persons plus the certification manager. This committee can include members of the management committee and or draw on outside expertise.
- **Option 2** where the Regional Body will have a management committee elected by its members. This committee will appoint an administration person and depending on the capacity of the group a certification coordinator. They will also appoint a certification 'manager' from outside their RB, this person could also be the certification manager for another RB. The certification coordinator will facilitate between the Regional Body and 'outside' certification manager. In effect the Regional Body will take responsibility for the administrative functions and will contract out the certification functions to another Regional Body or via the National Office.

It is envisaged that Option 2 may be used as a transition process that allows for areas to implement the OrganicFarmNZ without taking on the full responsibilities of managing the certification process. In time when there is enough depth and experience in the Region the Body may move to adopt Option 1.

2.3.1 Role of the Certification Manager (Option 1)

The certification manager's position in the Regional Body will be appointed (not elected) by the Regional Body Management Committee.

Responsibilities include the management of all certification activities to include:

Coordination of certification committee;

- Respond to queries re standards, production rules and certification process;
- Appoint and assign auditors.
- Screen all the auditor's reports.
- Allocate members to Pods and manage Pod related issues such as members changing Pods.

2.3.2 The Certification Committee (Option 1)

The Certification Committee is to be appointed by the Regional Body Management Committee.

The Certification Committee will comprise of the Certification Manager and at least 2 other persons appointed by the Regional Body. These persons may or not be members of the Regional Body, the first criteria for their appointment is that they have the ability to understand the compliance procedures and production rules and apply these to the certification processes.

2.3.3 Regional Body Management Option 1

The role of the Regional Body for Option 1 will be to carry out the day-to-day activities that relate to providing the members of the Regional Body with an organic certification.

The responsibilities will include general administration and the processing and management of certification procedures including maintaining a regional database and the issuing of certificates.

Each Regional Body will comprise of a management committee (elected by the members), certification committee nominated or appointed by Regional Body management committee and have at least two appointed positions (administration person and certification manager).

The producer's certification numbers will be allocated by the National Office, a coded number will be issued to each certified producer.

Note that if the producer has more than one property separate then separate numbers will be required.

Certificates will be issued only after the certification process has been completed and the data concerning each applicant is received at the National Office and entered into the National Database.

The producer's certificates will be issued by the National Office and distributed by the Regional Body. If certification is cancelled or lapses then the code allocated to that producer will be withdrawn from use.

2.3.4 Regional Body Management Option 2

The role of the Regional Body for Option 2 will be to provide for the administrative requirements of certification only. These functions will include maintaining a membership database, distribution of documentation, the co-ordination of pods and individual applicants. The process for implementing and completing certification approvals will be carried another Regional Body or National Office.

The Option 2 Regional Body will comprise of a Management Committee of at least 3 persons elected by Regional Body membership. The Management Committee will appoint an administration position person who may be a committee member or an outside person.

The producer certification numbers will be allocated by the National Office and certificates issued by the National Office. The certification number will identify the region and the producer and will be unique to each certificate holder. If certification is cancelled or lapses then the code allocated to that producer will be withdrawn from use.

2.4 Membership of Regional Body

The members of the Regional Body can be:

- producers who have completed and complied with all registration requirements including the payment of fees, or
- non-producer members who completed an membership application form and have paid a fee to belong to the group.

The voting status of both the producer and non-producer members will be determined by each Regional Body.

2.5 Fees to be paid by producers

The fee will comprise:

- Overhead to the National Office (related to functions of NCC and NO);
- NCC and Regional Body accreditation costs;
- Fees are to be set by each Regional Body to cover costs of their operation (includes auditor). There is no set format for fee setting and the process may vary from region to region.

The costs of the National Office will be reviewed annually by the NCC.

2.6 Producer Groups (Pods)

Producer groups or pods are defined as a grouping of 3 to 8 producers who agree to work together for the purpose of securing their organic certification through a peer review process. The ideal pod size appears to be 5 as this number allows the pod peer review process to be completed within one day.

The members of each pod will select a pod leader annually; ideally this position is to rotate around the group with each member being the pod leader for 1 year and as result sharing the additional responsibilities of this role around the group.

Note that while the ideal is to start with at least 4 persons in a pod starting with 3 would be acceptable adding other members in the second year.

The properties that make up a pod can produce a range of different products. The properties can vary in size from home gardens to orchards and farms. The strength of the pod system is that it provides a way for persons within a community who produce different products to come together and share a collective focus.

2.7 Pod leader's responsibilities

The Pod leader is required to co-ordinate certification compliance requirements for their pod as outlined in the Operations Manual.

The Pod leader is the focus point for contact between the pod members and the Regional Body.

3.0 Certification and Administration

3.1 Registration (new members)

New members must complete the Application Form and Management Plan and send it to the Certification Manager of the local Regional Body. Where the Regional Body contact is unknown to the applicant or has yet to be established the completed forms should be sent to the National Office, 9 Church Street, Tirau 3410. The National Office will direct the documentation to the appropriate Regional Body.

For a new pod member the Regional Body will allocate where necessary new members to an appropriate pod, in many cases it is expected that through local contacts members will find their own pod which can then be registered with the Regional Body.

3.2 Re-registration (renewal)

Members renewing their membership will complete the Application Form and update their Management Plan, take copy then and send to their pod leader.

Members wishing to change pods should send their renewal application to the Regional Body Administrator with a note to explain why the change and which pod they wish to join. The change over timing should have some flexibility given that pods may have different certification cycles (start at different times of year). Generally any change should take place at the end of the certification year, however, to allow a member to change pods to fit in with the new pods certification cycle a transfer can take place at any time so long as the certification process has been completed for that year. Thus a certification from one pod can be carried over to another pod for the year during which a change from one pod to another occurs.

3.3 Members Changing Producer Groups (Pods)

Changing from one Pod to another is possible and to be encouraged as more and more producers join the programme and it becomes possible to have the pod members in closer and closer proximity to each other. The ideal is that catchments of neighbouring producers will expand and become linked together thus joining adjacent properties together.

3.3 Processing and filing of certification records (including reports) for group certification

3.3.1 Document Trail - Option 1

- 1) Each pod member receives application forms, management plan and standards from Regional Body.
- 2) Applications and Management plans completed by individuals and sent to Pod leader.
- 3) Pod leader to application and management plan completed and sign the cover page of each Pod member's application and management plan.
- 4) Pod leader to send list of pod members who have completed the documentation to the Regional Body Certification Manager.
- 5) Regional Body Certification manager to confirm with Pod leader that the peer review can be completed. Peer review forms sent to pod leader.
- 6) Pod leader to coordinate Peer review. The Pod leader (coordinator) is responsible for ensuring the Peer Review forms are completed.

- 6) Peer review completed, Pod leader to collate Review Forms and send with a copy of each properties Management Plan to the Certification Manager.
- 7) Certification Manager to review forms, to appoint a Registered Auditor and send copies of Management Plans and notes to the Auditor.
- 8) Auditor to contact Pod leader and arrange Pod audit.
- 9) Auditor to file report(s) for the pod audit with the Certification Manager.
- 10) Certification manager to process reports and present recommendations to Certification Committee.
- 11) Committee to review recommendations and where appropriate grant certification or request further information.
- 12) List of members awarded certification sent to National Office along with key information for national database.
- 13) National Office to allocate certification numbers.
- 14) Regional Body to issue certificate to each pod member.

TEMPLATE FOR NATIONAL DATABASE AND REGIONAL

Certification Manager Audit (Management Plan and Peer/Individual Review Checklist)

Completed for each client when documentation received.

Copy to auditor when audit schedule confirmed.

3.3.2 Document Trail Option 2

- 1) Each pod member receives application forms, management plan and standards from Regional Body.
- 2) Applications and Management plans completed by individuals and sent to Pod leader.
- 3) Pod leader to application and management plan completed and sign the cover page of each Pod member's application and management plan.
- 4) Pod leader to send list of pod members who have completed the documentation to the Regional Body Certification Manager.
- 5) Regional Body Certification manager to confirm with Pod leader that the peer review can be completed. Peer review forms sent to pod leader.
- 6) Appointed Regional Body to record applicant details in database and via electronic mail or fax to Regional Body administration or certification person acknowledge receipt of the pod member list(s) and provide written approval to begin pod peer review process.
- 7) Regional Body administration person to communicate with Pod leader, provide forms etc for Peer Review.
- 8) Peer review completed Pod leader to collate Review Forms with management plans of each property to Regional Body administration person.
- 9) Regional Body administration person to forward forms to appointed certification manager.
- 10) Certification manager to review forms and appoint auditor and manage the audit process.
 - Auditor to receive Pod details and reports.
 - Auditor to contact Pod leader and arrange Pod audit.
 - Audit report(s) and audit Cover sheet to National Office for review by Certification Manager.
 - Certification manager with certification committee to process auditor's reports.
 - Once documentation complete and all compliance procedures met and the property and producer details entered into the National Database a certificate will be issued. If there are short falls in the auditor's reporting, he or she will be required to revisit the Pod to remedy such shortfalls (at their own cost).

- National Office to allocate certification number and send certificates to Regional Body
- 11) Regional Body to issue certificate to each Pod member.

3.4 Certificates

Certificates will be issued by the Regional Body (Option1 and Option 2).

Certificates are issued to each property owner (once they have met the certification requirements) and whether they are part of a group certification or an individual certification for a period of 12 months from the date of peer group property audit or individual property audit.

Current certificates must kept on file and be available for scrutiny by persons wishing to buy product from the certificate holder.

A copy of the original certificate can be sent with consignments as required by purchasers.

4.0 Confidentiality

All documentation provided by members is confidential and therefore must be filed in a secure manner, for example a locked cupboard or filing cabinet. Failure to provide a secure place for documentation relating to membership and certification will be deemed a non-compliance.

Copies of management plans are to be kept by Regional Body for 12 months after a certificate is issued. After the 12 month period the management plans are to be returned to the property owners and to be kept by the owners for a period of 5 years. The rationale for returning the documents is to place responsibility for record keeping on the producer members and also to minimise the storage problems at the Regional Body office.

Pod members are bound to treat all information gathered as part of the peer review as strictly confidential.

5.0 Book Keeping (financial records)

All fees collected and payments made by Regional Bodies and the National Office including those to staff and auditors must be accounted for in accordance with normal book keeping and accounting practice and these financial records are to be presented to the annual general meeting of the Regional Body and if required be made available for scrutiny by the NCC and for scrutiny as part of the annual accreditation audit.

6.0 The Peer Review Process

6.1 Organising the Pod Peer Review

The Peer Review system for the pods is designed to provide individuals with a framework and a process for ensuring the organic integrity of their properties and enable them to be certified by OrganicFarmNZ.

The peer review process requires the pod members to visit each property in a pod and for each property work through the questions provided in the peer review checklist. This process aims to cross-reference what has been described in a property management plan with against what the pod members observe when they visit a property and talk with the managers/owners.

Interpretations of the 'organic-ness' of activities on each property must be based strictly on and referenced to the OrganicFarmNZ Standards and Production Rules. This means that each individual pod member must take responsibility for understanding the Standards and Production Rules.

For each property peer review one member of the group (Pod) will be responsible for leading the review and completing the paper work. The task of Peer Reviewer should rotate around the group.

- A pod member cannot complete the Peer Review checklist for their own property.
- All members of a pod must be present at all peer review visits to the other pod members properties. The absence of any pod member from the review process is deemed a non-compliance for that individual. In exceptional circumstances a waiver may be granted, this

waver must be requested in writing and recorded and approved by the Regional Body Administrator.

Key steps in the Peer Review are:

Prior to the peer review process beginning each applicant will have made contact with the regional Body, received their application and management plan forms and been organised into their pod.

Pod members meet to select their pod leader and organise a time for the peer review.

Group (pod) members complete their individual management plan for their property.

Each pod member will keep a copy of their management plan and send a copy of the management plan, with supporting documentation to pod leader within the timeframe indicated by the Regional Office.

- Pod leader will check each Management Plan to see that ALL boxes in forms have a response recorded. The Pod leader will then send a list of the pod members to the certification manager or administration person of the regional body. The Regional Body will then provide the pod with the appropriate documents for the peer review. The pod leader will then facilitate the peer review and follow through the process as per Option 1 or Option 2.

For each property:

An onsite review of the management plan and supporting documentation by the nominated reviewer and other pod members is required.

A Peer Review Checklist completed by the nominated reviewer. This will involve scrutiny of the property to oversee such things that could include buffer zones, storage areas, livestock stock quarantine areas, input schedules and overall site management. His process will include discussions by the pod about various property management practices.

The peer review is not intended to be threatening for the property owner but rather a learning experience for all the participants so it is important that group members should remain focused on interpreting the management activities of each property through the standards and production guidelines and not their own opinions. A non-hierarchical approach is essential for the wellbeing of this process.

Things to watch for include:

The pod becoming distracted by enthusiastic property owners, the property visit is not a tour of the property lead by the property owner but rather a review of the property's management that is lead by the nominated group member.

Individuals with strong views who hold forth on their opinions on the standards and how they should change to fit their situation. The process for suggesting changes to the standards is via the Regional Body Certification Manager into the standards review process.

Individuals who have been uncertified 'organic' for years but find that when they come under the scrutiny of an audit against a set of standards and production rules they have some management practices which fall outside the requirements of the standards. The Peer review team can only assess the status of the property against the OrganicFarmNZ standard.

Once the Peer Review Checklist has been completed for a property the group are required to make recommendations and record their observations on the Checklist Form. Any statements in this section must be referenced against the specific sections in the Management Plan and or the Standards and Production Rules.

Consensus by the group is not required for a 'recommendation' on the certification status of a property, but their various opinions should be recorded on the Peer review checklist. The certification manager and auditor will consider these opinions when he or she reviews the peer review documents. Note that the final decision on the certification status of a property will be made by the Certification Manager and Certification Committee after an independent audit has been made of the groups peer review process and outcomes.

Remember: All members of the group present at the Peer Review must write their names and sign the Peer Review Checklist Form to confirm their presence at the audit. The pod leader must write their name and sign the checklist at the peer review to confirm the presence of pod members.

Completed Checklist Form is to be passed to pod leader. Pod leader is to follow the process for either Regional Body Option 1 or Option 2.

6.2 Individual Applications for Certification

Producers who wish to register for certification by OrganicFarmNZ as individuals can do so on the understanding that the fees for a one-on-one certification will differ from the fees paid by pod members.

The circumstances that might lead to an individual registration with OrganicFarmNZ include the applicant's desire to be an individual applicant, insufficient numbers of other organic producers in an area to form a group or where a property owner with strong views may present complexities who require the expertise of a one-on-one audit.

The decision to require an individual to register for an individual audit is at the discretion of the certification manager.

6.2.1 Individual application process

- 1) Applicant applies for and receives receive application forms and property management plan from Regional Body or National Office.
- 2) Application Form and Property Management Plan with supporting documentation to be completed by the applicant and sent to Regional Body. If no Regional Body nominated then applicant should send documents to National Office.
- 3) Regional Body Certification Manager or National Office Certification coordinator to check forms and allocate property audit to auditor.
- 6) Auditor to contact applicant, organise and complete property audit.
- 7) Auditors report and recommendation to Certification Manager/National Office.
- 8) Certificate issued once all conditions for certification have been met.

6.2.2 The Fees (for individual applicants)

The fees for processing these applications and providing an audit will be determined on a case-by-case basis and a quote provided. Applicants who live in remote locations will be expected to meet costs of extra travel and time required of the auditor.

6.2.3 The Certificate (for individual applicants)

Certificates are issued to each property owner for a period of 12 months from the date of peer group property audit or individual property audit.

Current certificates must kept on file and be available for scrutiny by persons wishing to buy product from the certificate holder.

A copy of the original certificate can be sent with consignments as required by purchasers.

7.0 Producer Group External Audit

7.1 The Auditor

Auditors must be able to demonstrate an extensive knowledge of the ORGANIC FARM NZ compliance standards and production rules. Ideally the auditors will have had some previous experience as organic producers and or auditors. They will also be able to demonstrate good communication skills, integrity, investigative skills and a good relationship with the producers along with writing and reporting skills.

Auditors will only be appointed once they have completed an appropriate training course in OrganicFarmNZ processes.

Auditors will be appointed for each of the Regional Bodies either by the Regional Body or National Office depending on the status of the Regional Body. For smaller areas one auditor may cover 2 or more regions.

Guidelines for auditors are published separately and are available from the National Office.

7.2 The Audit Process

For pods the role of the auditor will be to audit the peer review process.

For individual applicants the auditor will audit the whole property.

The audit process will be supported by spot checks by the auditor on various properties from time to time.

In addition to the Peer Review and independent audit the auditor may require an individual to carry out chemical residue tests on soil and or plants before a certificate can be issued.

Once the application forms and peer review checklists have been processed an auditor will be appointed (Option1/2).

The steps in the audit process are as below:

- Auditor to receive relevant documentation from certification manager.
- Auditor to review documentation and plan audit process for the pod concerned.
- Auditor to contact Pod leader.
- POD leader to facilitate group as per requirements of auditor.
- Auditor to complete audits report(s) on template provided by the Certification Manager. A copy of audit report to be left with the owner/manager of each property audited.
- Report(s) to Certification Manager.

Next stage is to be completed as per Option 1 or Option 2.

Note that for most pod audits a sample of properties will be selected, it is not a requirement that each property in a pod is audited each year. The focus is on the capacity of the pod members to accurately assess the organic status of the properties in their pod.

Individual audits:

- Auditor to receive relevant documentation from certification manager.
- Auditor to review documentation and plan audit process for the property concerned.
- Auditor to contact property owner.
- Auditor to complete Individual Property Audit Checklist. A copy of property audit conclusions and recommendations to be left with the property owner.
- Report to Certification Manager
- Certification committee to process report.
- Details entered into database by Regional Body Certification Manager and sent to NO.
- Certificate issued

8.0 Screening New Applications

For the Application Form and Management Plan to be valid all sections (boxes) must be acknowledged by the applicant. For sections in the form(s) that do not apply to the applicant the applicant must mark each box with a cross or write N/A.

It is important to identify at the earliest stage of the certification cycle properties and situations that will unreasonably challenge the Peer Review process. If potential problems are identified they should be discussed with the pod leader and or the Regional Body Certification Manager to establish the most appropriate course of action.

9.0 Compliance Procedures Review

The Compliance Procedures of OrganicFarmNZ will be reviewed and updated as required on an annual basis. The review process is an ongoing and certified OrganicFarmNZ producers are invited to contribute in writing suggestions for improvements to the Standards for consideration by the Regional Bodies and NCC. Certified Organic Farm NZ producers will be notified within 28 working days of any changes to the Standards.

The Production Rules used by the OrganicFarmNZ are the property of BIOGRO NZ. BIOGRO NZ will be responsible for production rules review and providing updates to the production rules. Changes will be notified within 28 working days.

10.0 Responding to queries re compliance with Standards and Production Rules

In the first instance the Regional Body should provide the contact point and support for answering queries regarding compliance with the Standards. To support the Regional Body's the National Office will provide a service for answering queries on the standards.

Specific questions regarding the certification status of BIOGRO Certified or approved property inputs should be directed to BIOGRO NZ at Post Office Box 9683 Marion Square Wellington or Phone 04 8019741.

11.0 Disputes

Issues of dispute should be recorded in writing and addressed to the Regional Body Administrator where they will be passed on to the Regional Body Management Committee for their consideration. Decisions by the committee will be made in writing to the complainant.

Where disputes cannot be resolved at the regional level they can be passed on to the National Office either by the Regional Body or the complainant where the NCC's Disputes Committee will consider them. The NCC chairperson will appoint the Disputes Committee as and when required. The Disputes Committee decisions will be made in writing to the complainant. The decisions of the Disputes Committee will be final.