



Highlands & Islands Fire & Rescue Service

COMPLIMENT & COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Procedure Classification: **Unclassified**

Procedure Number: CS/AD-01

1. Purpose of the Procedure

To provide guidance on the process for compliments and complaints received by Highlands & Islands Fire & Rescue Service (HIFRS). The procedure to be followed on the receipt of a compliment or complaint is detailed below.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all compliments and complaints received from members of the public and other external stakeholders. Complaints from members of staff will be processed via the Service Grievance Policy. All HIFRS must comply with the requirements to process a compliment or complaint.

3. Responsibilities

The Head of Corporate Services has overall responsibility for the implementation and compliance of the policy and procedure. The Administration Manager has day-to-day responsibility for the management and co-ordination of the procedure. Specific responsibilities of employees are detailed in Sections 6 and 7 below.

4. Definitions

Compliment

A compliment is an expression of satisfaction about: the quality of service provided by HIFRS; a policy or procedure implemented by HIFRS; the competence, attitude or performance of a member(s) of HIFRS staff whilst carrying out their duties or representing the Service.

Complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about: the quality of service provided by HIFRS; a policy or procedure implemented by HIFRS; the competence, attitude or performance of a member(s) of HIFRS staff whilst carrying out their duties or representing the Service.

5. Related Policies & Documents

HIFRS Compliments & Complaints Policy
Guidance Note – How to make a Compliment or Complaint to HIFRS

6. Receipt of Compliments

Telephone/Personal Calls

The person expressing a compliment by telephone or in person should be encouraged to put their compliment in writing to the Head of Corporate Services, Service HQ, 16 Harbour Road, Inverness IV1 1TB, or by e-mail to compliments@hifrs.org.

Details of the compliment should be passed to the Administration Manager to record and process. The details of the compliment will be passed to the appropriate personnel.

Steps	Person Responsible
a) All written compliments received at Service HQ should be opened and date stamped, and passed immediately to the Administration Department.	Reception/Staff in receipt of written compliment
b) Details of compliments received via the telephone/or in person by any member of staff should be passed immediately to the Administration Department.	All staff
c) Details of the compliment shall be passed to the appropriate personnel and relevant Officer/Head of Department for information.	Administration Manager
d) All compliments shall be acknowledged by means of Standard Letter "Compliments-01"	Administration Manager
e) Compliments shall be recorded on the Compliment and Complaint database.	Administration Manager
f) The relevant Officer/Head of Department shall be responsible for any further correspondence as necessary, which should be passed to the Administration Manager to be recorded electronically in the Compliment and Complaint database.	Relevant Officer/Head of Department
g) The entry shall be updated in the Compliment and Complaint database.	Administration Manager
h) A report on the compliments received will be produced on a quarterly basis and passed to the Strategic Leadership Team for information and action as appropriate in relation to best practice.	Administration Manager

Refer to flow chart in Appendix A.

7. Receipt of Complaints

Telephone & Informal Complaints

We would hope that formal complaints are a last resort and any complaint can be resolved informally by the person who dealt with the matter being raised, or their line manager. Staff handling such complaints should identify themselves clearly to the complainant and be as helpful as possible. If the matter can be dealt with at this time and the complainant is fully satisfied, no further action is necessary other than reporting the facts to the Administration department for records.

However, if the complainant is not satisfied with the response or the person dealing with the complaint does not have sufficient information or authority to finalise the matter, the complainant should be encouraged to make a formal complaint in writing. Complainant should be supplied with a copy of the Guidance Note – “Making a Compliment of Complaint” or referred to the website for information under the “Contact Us” section.

All complaints received will be processed in the following manner:

Steps	Person Responsible
<u>Informal & Telephone Complaints</u>	
a) Informal or telephone complaints should be passed to the member of staff responsible for the issue raised, or their line manager.	All Staff in receipt of complaint
b) Responsible member of staff should identify themselves and try to resolve the complaint if possible. If complaint has been resolved details should be passed to the Administration Department for recording.	Responsible member of staff
c) The details of the informal complaint and how it was resolved will be recorded on the central Compliments & Complaints database.	Administration Manager
d) Where staff do not have sufficient information or authority to resolve the matter, the complainant should be offered the opportunity to make a formal complaint in writing. Complainant should be supplied with a copy of the Guidance Note – “Making a Compliment or Complaint” or referred to the website for information under the “Contact Us” section.	Responsible member of staff
<u>Formal Complaints</u>	
e) All formal complaints should be forwarded immediately to the Administration Department for processing.	All staff in receipt of a formal complaint
f) The complaint will be acknowledged within 3 working days via Standard letter “Complaints-01”.	Administration Manager
g) The complaint details will be recorded on the central Compliments & Complaints database and passed to the relevant Head of Department for action and investigation.	Administration Manager

- | | | |
|----|---|--|
| h) | The Head of Department will arrange for an appropriate senior member of staff to investigate the complaint within the 20 working day time limit. | Head of Department |
| i) | The nominated member of staff will investigate the details of the complaint within the set time limit. Where the issues are complex and investigation will take longer than the 20 working days the complainant will be informed of the revised timescale. | Nominated member of staff |
| j) | On conclusion of investigation of the complaint, the complainant shall be informed in writing (via Standard letter "Complaints-02") of the outcome of the complaint, detailing whether it has been upheld, not upheld or partially upheld, and action taken if appropriate. | Nominated member of staff/
Head of Department |
| k) | The nominated member of staff will keep a record of the method of investigation. All records and correspondence should be forwarded to the Administration Department for recording on the central database. | Nominated member of staff/
Head of Department |
| l) | All relevant information shall be entered onto the central database and all relevant correspondence and records linked electronically to the database. | Administration
Manager |

Confidentiality – Employees will not be named when complaints are recorded on the database and records and correspondence will be stored securely and access restricted to appropriate personnel.

Refer to Flow Chart in Appendix B.

- | | | |
|----|--|---------------------------|
| m) | If the complainant is dissatisfied with the result of the investigation and has requested a review of the complaint, the request should be acknowledged and passed to the Chief Fire Officer for action. | Administration
Manager |
| n) | A review of the complaint investigation will be conducted by a member or members of the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) within 20 working days. | Member of SLT |
| o) | The outcome of the review will be conveyed to the complainer who will be advised if the original outcome of the complaint has been upheld or not. | Member of SLT |
| p) | All records and correspondence relating to the review should be forwarded to the Administration Department for recording on the central database. | Member of SLT |
| q) | A report on the complaints received will be produced on a quarterly basis and passed to the Strategic Leadership Team for information and action as appropriate in relation to best practice. | Administration
Manager |

Refer to Flow Chart in Appendix C.

8. Equality Impact Assessment

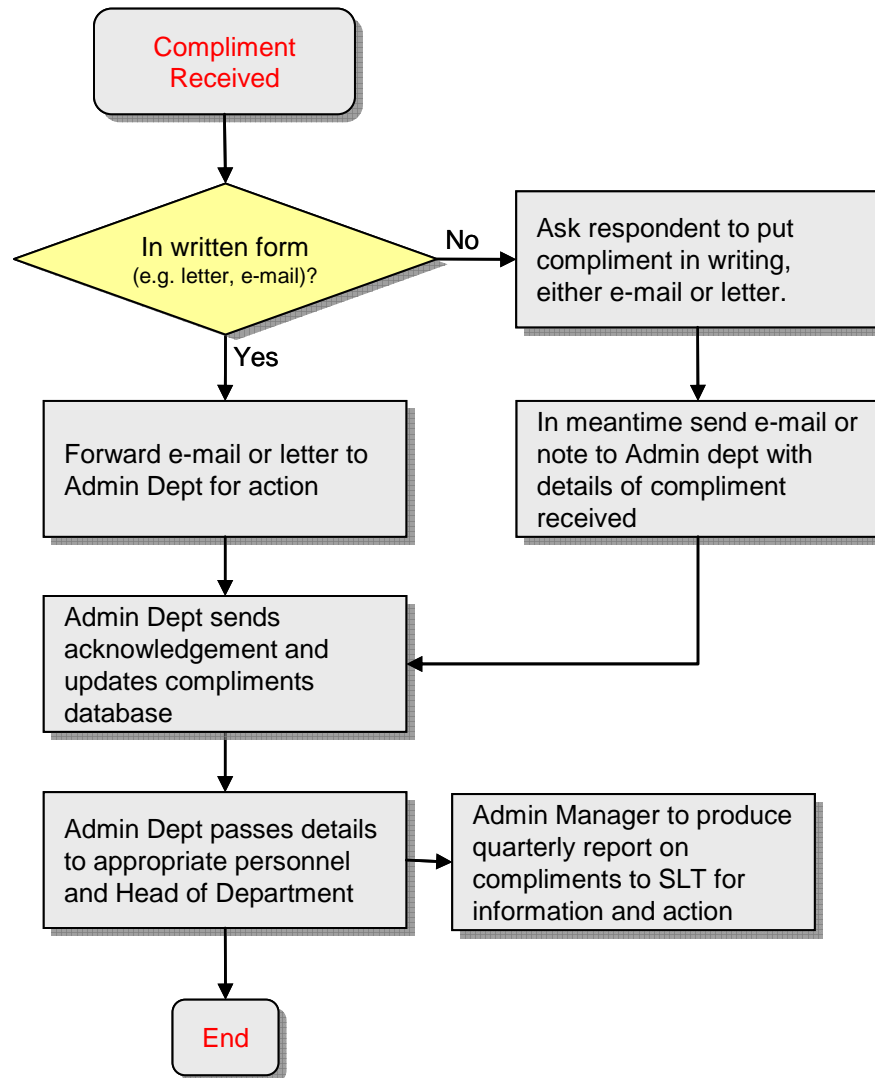
This procedure was impact assessed on 9/2/09.

9. Review

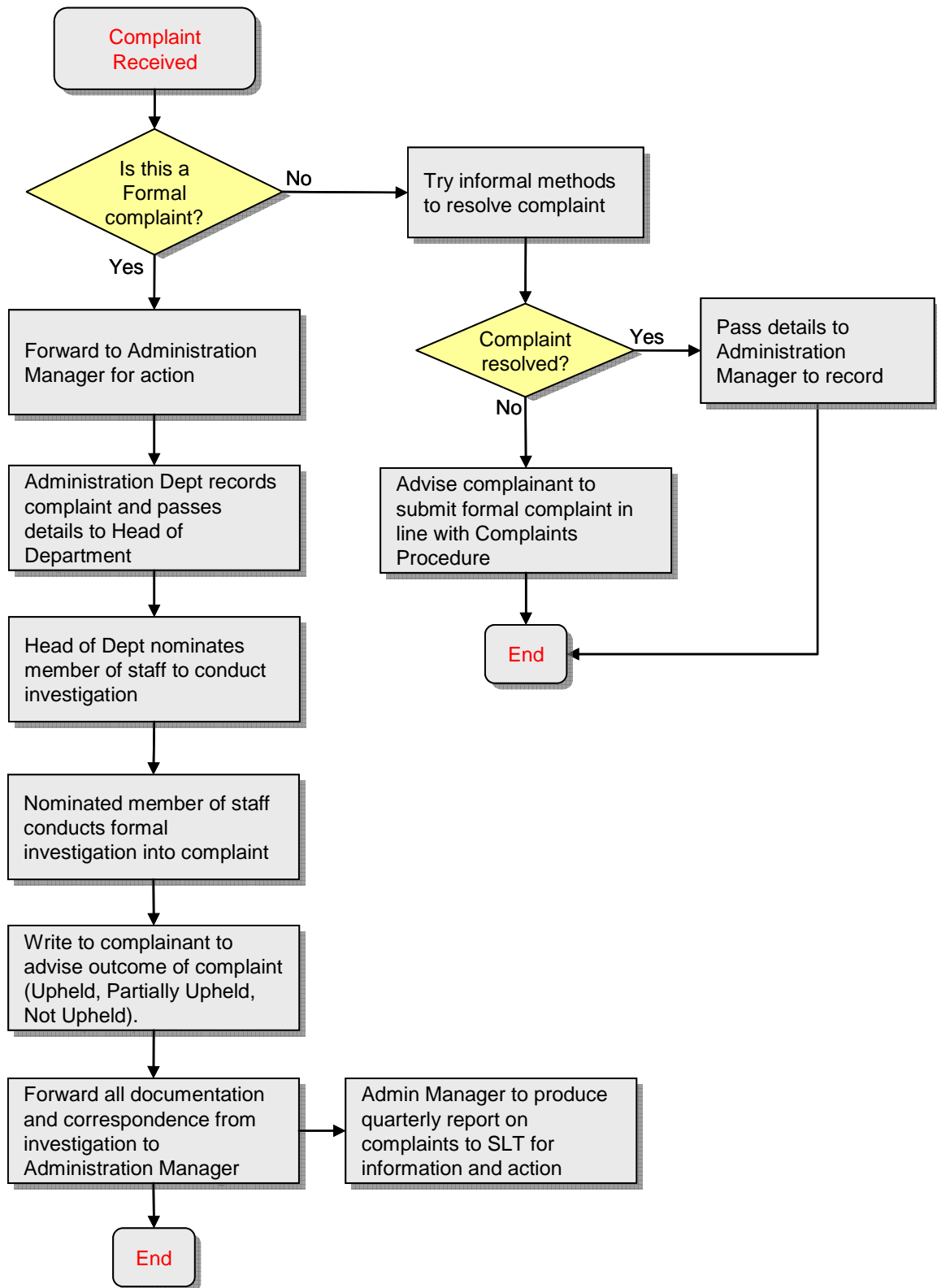
This procedure will be reviewed on a 3 yearly basis.

Next Review: March 2012.

RECEIPT OF A COMPLIMENT - FLOW CHART



RECEIPT OF A COMPLAINT - FLOW CHART



REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF A COMPLAINT - FLOW CHART

