



## **Zoloterra Complaints Policy**

Zoloterra welcomes complaints and comments from our customers. Our aim is to handle complaints quickly in a sensitive, honest and fair way. It is important to us that we provide our customers with an excellent service and that we learn from our mistakes. Zoloterra will try to resolve any complaint at the earliest possible stage that is consistent with Zoloterra's policies and vision. However, each case must be judged on its own merits.

### **Who can complain?**

Any Zoloterra customer be they a participant, volunteer, student or partner organisation

### **How can a customer make a complaint?**

Complaints can be made by letter, email, telephone or by speaking to a member of Zoloterra staff.

### **The complaints procedures**

Zoloterra's complaints procedure stages:

Stage one – Informal Complaint

Stage two – Formal Complaint

Stage three – Formal Complaint Review

Stage four – Final Appeal

### **Stage one – Informal Complaint**

In the first instance any complaint made by a customer will be dealt with informally by whichever member of staff has contact with the customer. Zoloterra will endeavour to solve any complaints at this stage but if the customer cannot resolve their complaint they will be advised who to contact and how to make a Formal Complaint (Stage two). Stage one should be completed within 5 working days.

### **Stage two – Formal Complaint**

If the customer is unhappy with the way their informal complaint is dealt with, they can make a Formal Complaint. An Investigating Officer will investigate the complaint and contact those people involved. A timescale will be agreed between the customer and Zoloterra for the investigation to take part. We will aim to resolve complaints at stage two as soon as possible but within 10 working days, although it may take longer where documentary evidence or visits are required.

Once the investigation is complete the Investigating Officer will write to the complainant outlining the outcome of the complaint and what action, if any, Zoloterra will be taking. All Formal Complaints will be recorded so that Zoloterra can track complaints and learn from them. If the complainant is not happy with the outcome of the complaint then they will be informed on how to take the complaint further. (Stage three)

### **Stage three – Formal Complaint Review**

If a customer is unhappy with the outcome of the Formal Complaint then they can request a Formal Complaint Review. They must do this within 10 days of the

decision of the Formal Complaints (stage two). The Investigating Officer will speak with the complainant by phone and decide a timescale in which this matter will be dealt with the complainant. We will aim to resolve complaints at stage three as soon as possible but within 10 working days, although it may take longer where documentary evidence or visits are required. The Investigating Officer will then review the file and the decision made during the Formal Complaint (Stage two) and will speak to any other staff or third parties that are deemed relevant. Once the investigation is complete the Investigation Officer will write to the complainant outlining the outcome of the complaint and what action, if any, Zoloterra will be taking. If the complainant is unhappy about the decision of the complaint then they will be advised on how to take further (stage four)

#### **Stage four – Final Appeal**

If a customer is unhappy with the outcome of the Formal Complaint Review, they may request a Final Appeal (Stage four). All requests for a Final Appeal should be made in writing to the director of Zoloterra outlining why the complainant is unhappy with the decision of the Formal Complaint Review. This must be done within 10 days of the Formal Complaint Review and all stages must be completed before a Final Appeal will be considered. The director will outline the timescale to the complainant which will be dependent on panel and complainant availability and any visits necessary although we will aim to complete final appeals within 4 working weeks.

The director will set up an appeal panel who will advise on the complaint. They will then review any documentary evidence from previous stages as well as speaking with the Investigating Officers who have been involved. The complainant will be asked to state their case for appeal in person to the panel. Once the appeal panel has considered the case they will inform the complainant of their decision.

#### **Learning from complaints**

After all formal complaints have been resolved the director, managers and staff will meet to discuss the complaint. Particular attention will be paid to how Zoloterra can learn from the complaint and about any changes in policy and procedure that would have resolved the complaint earlier.