#### Introduction and guiding principles for managing complaints and sensitive issues on the NZSL Board

1. While the NZSL Board is not established to process or investigate complaints, the NZSL Board still has a responsibility to respond to complaints and sensitive issues raised with the NZSL Board in a fair, appropriate and timely manner.
2. The NZSL Board needs to respect both sides of any complainant or sensitive issue, and any others that may be involved, and seek to resolve issues and/or support a resolution.
3. If the complaint is between organisations or individuals and organisations then the NZSL Board will firstly work to have both parties work through the issues and resolve these themselves, rather than the NZSL Board acting to resolve the issue between the two parties.
4. It is recommended that **a complaints sub-committee** is established to manage complaints/sensitive issues without always needing to involve the full NZSL Board. The ‘complaints sub-committee’ will be the Chair, Deputy Chair and the ODI Director. Members of the complaints sub-committee who has a conflict of interest with the subject matter of the complaint/sensitive issue will not be involved on the content of the matter.
5. Processes for working to resolve the complaint/sensitive issue will follow strict confidentiality practices, and involvement of others will be restricted to those who need to know to resolve or manage the issue.
6. Given that there will be a range of complaints/sensitive issues; the process described below provides broad guidelines in managing issues/complaints rather than a detailed methodology.

#### Guidelines for responding to and managing complaints and sensitive issues

1. If the complaint or sensitive issue comes to a NZSL Board member, or if NZSL Board members have a concern/complaint about NZSL Board issues, then the complaint/sensitive issue should immediately be passed to the ODI Director, and the Chair and/or Deputy Chair (the ‘complaints sub-committee’).
2. The complaints sub-committee will assess the complaint/issue and decide on the appropriate processes to be followed to resolve the complaint/issue. They will also ensure that when a complaint or issue is received, it will be acknowledged as soon as possible and the next steps, processes and timeframe will be provided to the person/organisation who made the complaint or raised the issue. There are three broad approaches possible, depending on the issue or complaint:
	1. refer on with approval from complainant to relevant other party
	2. the complaints sub-committee progress the agreed resolution process, updating and report back to the NZSL Board
	3. refer the complaint/issue to the NZSL Board for discussion
3. The purpose of referring on to the relevant other party may be to:
* inform as necessary
* seek information to inform the next steps
* seek input or feedback on the next steps
* link the parties so that they can resolve between themselves
* assist other parties to resolve the issue
* enable of the NZSL Board to take action – explain or seek to resolve.
1. If it is necessary for the complaint/issue to be forwarded to the full NZSL Board, the letter will be anonymised and marked 'CONFIDENTIAL – NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION’.
2. Depending on seriousness of the issue, the ODI Director will be responsible to flag any risks or sensitive issues with the Minister or Ministry of Social Development General Manager.
3. Next steps/actions will be progressed dependent on the nature of the complaint or sensitivity of the issues.