Grievance Procedure

1. PURPOSE

The Grievance Procedure is available to any staff member that has a grievance in the work situation. The Company accepts that it is in the mutual interest of the organisation and its employees that a formal procedure exists to bring grievances to the attention of the management without fear of discrimination or victimisation.

2. DEFINITION

A grievance is a sense of dissatisfaction or feeling of injustice which an employee in the work situation has, which originates from the working relationship between the employee and the employer.

3. POLICY

Minor grievances should be addressed at an informal meeting between the employee and the manager as an effective way of resolving minor issues and also to encourage open communication between management and their staff.

Instances where the grievance is of a serious nature or where the employee requests a formal grievance hearing then this will be arranged without detriment to the employees' service with the organisation.

Grievances should be handled as speedily as possible in an early stage at the point where the grievance originated. It is important to adhere to the timelines mentioned below.

Any employee will have the right to be represented by an elected employee representative or shop steward in the handling of his/her case. The Human Resources Manager or an appointed person will provide advice to all parties and provide support at each level of investigation.

Should the services of an interpreter be required, the employer will provide this service.

Management will appoint a neutral chairperson to chair the grievance hearing.

4. STEPS OF THE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Step 1: A staff member with a grievance must first report the grievance verbally to the person immediately in charge of him/her. This should be done on the same day or within three working days following the day the event occurred that gave rise to the grievance. If no agreement is reached, the staff member may seek the assistance of the Union.

Step 2: The staff member and the Union representative must arrange to see the person immediately in charge of the staff member to resolve the problem. If the issue affects two or more staff members answerable to the same person, not more than two of these staff members will represent the other staff members.

The person in charge may seek advice from his/her superiors. If a satisfactory solution is not reached within three working days of the grievance first being raised at Step 2, then the next step becomes effective. If this occurs, then the person in charge records details and circumstances of the grievance.

Step 3: This stage involves the completion of the grievance form by the staff member. The staff member signs the form together with the Union representative and submits it to the Head of Department with a copy to the Human Resources Division.

At this stage, the Department Head must investigate the grievance together with the person against whom the staff member has a grievance, the staff member concerned, and the Union representative. If a satisfactory solution is not reached within three working days of the grievance first being raised at Step 3, then the next step becomes effective.

Step 4: This is the final stage of the grievance procedure. A grievance hearing shall be arranged by the Department Head within five working days of the receipt of the grievance form. At the hearing the Department Head, or his designated alternative, shall hear the matter to ensure that the facts in the matter are established. This shall include establishing the nature of the redress which is required to resolve the grievance. The hearing shall normally be attended by the Department Head, the Human Resources Manager, the aggrieved staff member, the Union representative and the person who is the source of the staff member's grievance.

A record of the proceedings shall be kept by the Human Resources Department.

The presiding officer, having heard the matter, shall make his findings and ensure that these are set out in writing within three days of the hearing.

Step 5: A staff member who remains aggrieved after Step 4 may refer the matter through his representative to the Union. The Union may, on the staff member's behalf, submit an appeal memorandum to Council.