



Non-Tariff Barriers

Reporting, Monitoring and Eliminating Mechanism

Website Manual
Public Users
March 2013



Learn more about Non-Tariff Barriers to Trade - www.tradebarriers.org
This mechanism is supported by TradeMark Southern Africa - www.trademarksa.org

CONTENTS

1	Introduction	2
2	Public user access	3
3	Complaint submission and resolution process	4
4	Accessing the system.....	5
4.1	How to access the NTB website	5
4.2	How to create a new user account	6
4.3	How to log in if you have already registered.....	8
4.4	How to reset your password	9
5	Submitting and tracking complaints	10
5.1	How to submit a complaint	10
5.2	File uploads	11
5.3	How to track a complaint	11
6	Sending a complaint via SMS/Text message.....	14
7	Your user profile	16
7.1	How to edit your user profile.....	16
8	Support	17

1 Introduction

The following Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are integrating the economies of their member states into a single enlarged market through a grand Tripartite Free Trade Area (FTA):

- Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)
- East African Community (EAC)
- Southern African Development Community (SADC)

The grand FTA will be achieved through the removal of all tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade. With tariff liberalisation achieved, the challenge remains to eliminate the various Non-Tariff and other barriers to trade that contribute to the high cost of doing business across the region thereby inhibiting intra-/inter- regional trade. Removal of non-tariff and barriers to trade is identified as one of the priority areas of cooperation under the tripartite framework.

To this end, COMESA, EAC and SADC are implementing a Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) reporting, monitoring and eliminating mechanism which incorporates concrete timelines for the removal of NTBs.

The online NTBs reporting, monitoring and eliminating mechanism, developed for the REC Tripartite, is available on this website. The web-based NTBs mechanism will enhance transparency and easy follow-up of reported and identified NTBs.

2 Public user access

Members of the public can register as users on the NTB website in order to submit and track complaints regarding the elimination of identified trade barriers. Public users can also send a complaint in an SMS or Text message.

Public users **can**:

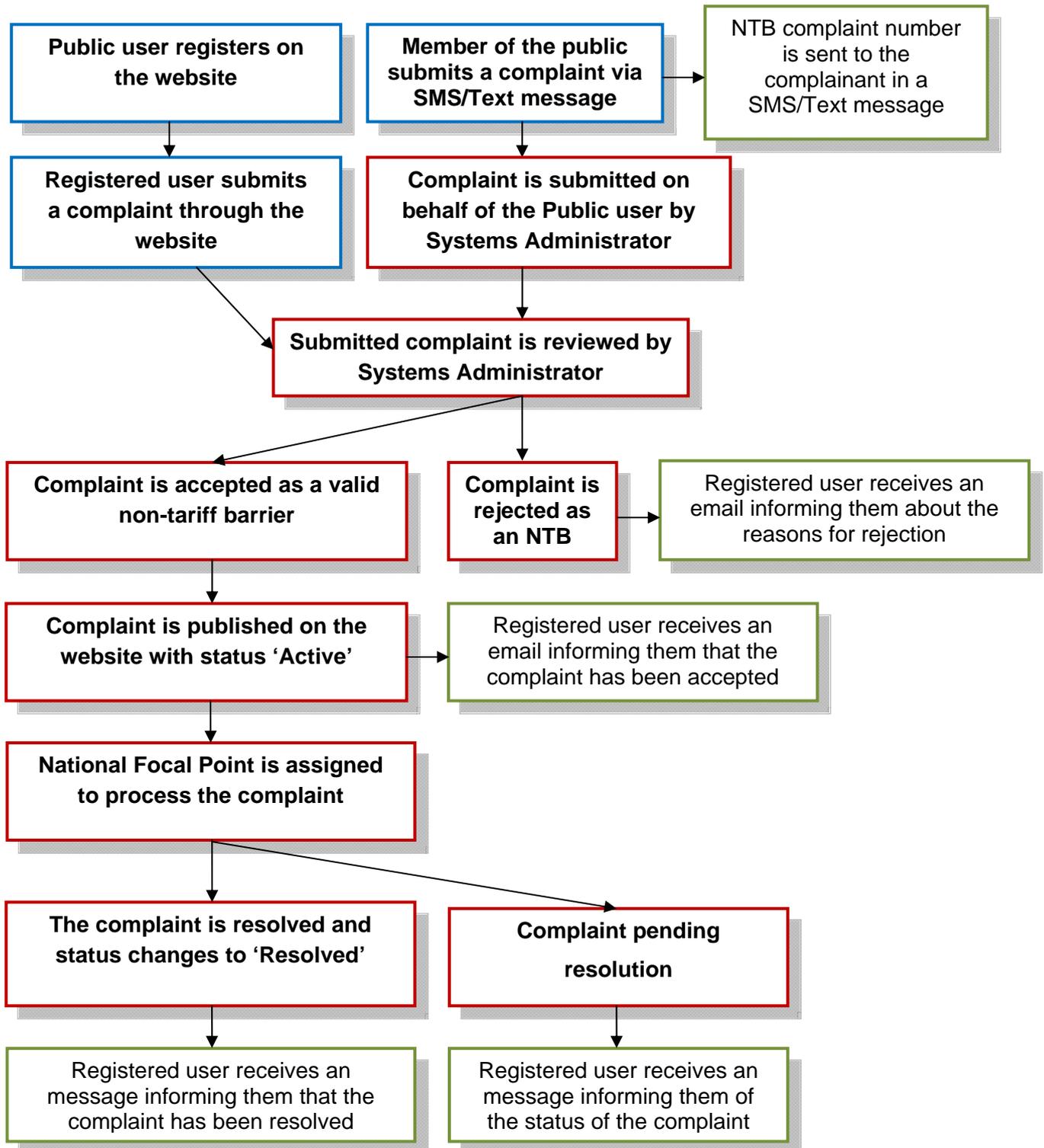
- through an SMS/Text message or directly through the website
- edit their own user profiles on the website
- view all active and resolved complaints on the website

Public users **cannot**:

- edit their own complaints after submitting them

3 Complaint submission and resolution process

Complaints submitted to the system are dealt with in a few phases by the various role players. The process is illustrated below.



Complaint submission and resolution process

4 Accessing the system

4.1 How to access the NTB website

To access the NTB website, type the following URL into the address bar of your browser:

<http://www.tradebarriers.org>

The home page displays as follows:

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Non-Tariff Barriers Reporting, Monitoring and Eliminating Mechanism. The header features logos for COMESA, EAC, and SADC, along with language options (English, Français, Português) and a map of Africa. The main navigation menu includes Home, About, Non-Tariff Barriers, Complaints, Notifications, Documents, Links, and Contact. The content area is divided into several sections: 'What is a Non-Tariff Barrier (NTB)?' with a brief definition and a 'Read more...' link; 'Report an NTB' with a 'Register your complaint' link and a list of steps; 'Statistics' showing 372 registered, 268 resolved, and 104 unresolved complaints; 'Most recent documents' listing reports from September 2011; 'Latest notifications' listing a Swaziland notification from June 2011; and 'In the news' with two news items from October 2011.

HOME	ABOUT	NON-TARIFF BARRIERS	COMPLAINTS	NOTIFICATIONS	DOCUMENTS	LINKS	CONTACT Country Focal Points
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What is a Non-Tariff Barrier (NTB)?

Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) refer to restrictions that result from prohibitions, conditions, or specific market requirements that make importation or exportation of products difficult and/or costly.

[Read more...](#)

Report an NTB

[Register your complaint](#)

Your complaint will be:

1. Reported to the appropriate country representatives
2. Published on this website

[Read more...](#)

Statistics

372 complaints registered
268 complaints resolved
104 complaints unresolved

[more](#)

Most recent documents

06 September 2011
[REPORT OF THE 5TH EAC REGIONAL FORUM ON ELIMINATION OF NON TARIFF BARRIERS](#)

05 September 2011

Latest notifications

14 June 2011
[Swaziland Notification on Import Permits Required for Importation of Scheduled Agricultural and Dairy Products and Levies Charged](#)

In the news

28 October 2011
[ICTS, trade and regional integration in Africa: report](#)

28 October 2011
[EU shuns Kenya fresh produce on safety concerns](#)

4.2 How to create a new user account

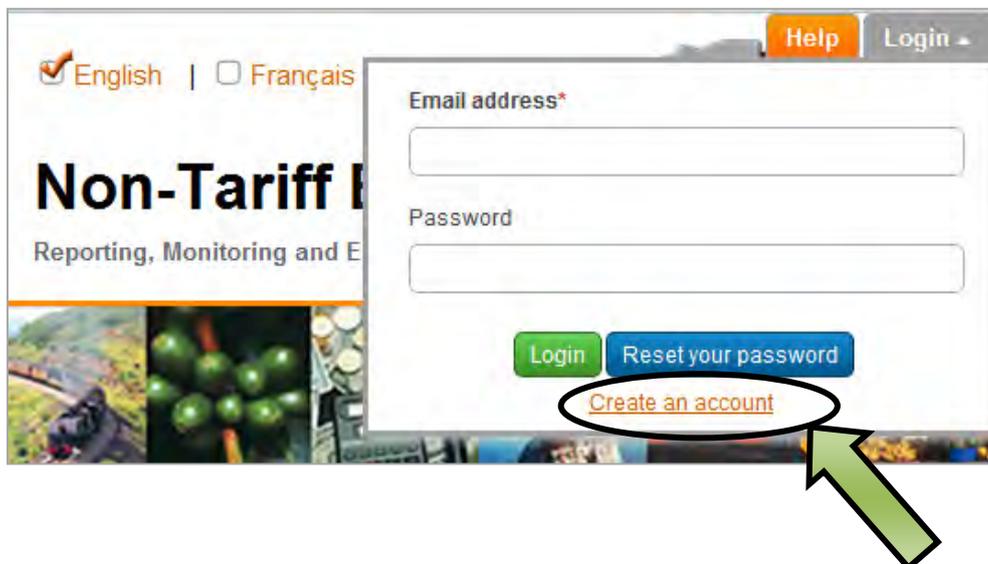
NOTE:

- Users must be registered in order to log on to the system to perform any functions relating to submission and tracking of complaints.

To create a new user account:



1. Open the website in a browser
2. Click on the “**Login**” button (located at the TOP RIGHT of the screen)
3. Click on the “**Create an account**” link at the bottom of the login form:



4. The **Registration** form will open:

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the website with logos for COMESA, EAC, and SACU. The main header reads "Non-Tariff Barriers" with the subtitle "Reporting, Monitoring and Eliminating Mechanism". A navigation menu includes links for HOME, ABOUT, NON-TARIFF BARRIERS, COMPLAINTS, NOTIFICATIONS, DOCUMENTS, LINKS, and CONTACT. Below the menu is a registration instruction: "Please register by completing the form below. Your personal details will not be published on the site and will only be used to acquire additional information about your submitted complaint." The registration form is titled "Register" and contains three input fields: "Email address*", "Password*", and "Re-enter your password.*". Below these fields is a language selection dropdown menu currently set to "English". A large green arrow points to the "Register" button at the bottom of the form.

5. Complete the Registration form, and click on “**Register**”
6. The system will email a once-off activation link
7. Click on the link in the email in order to activate your account.
8. Once your account has been activated, you can log into the site following the directions for registered users in section 4.3.

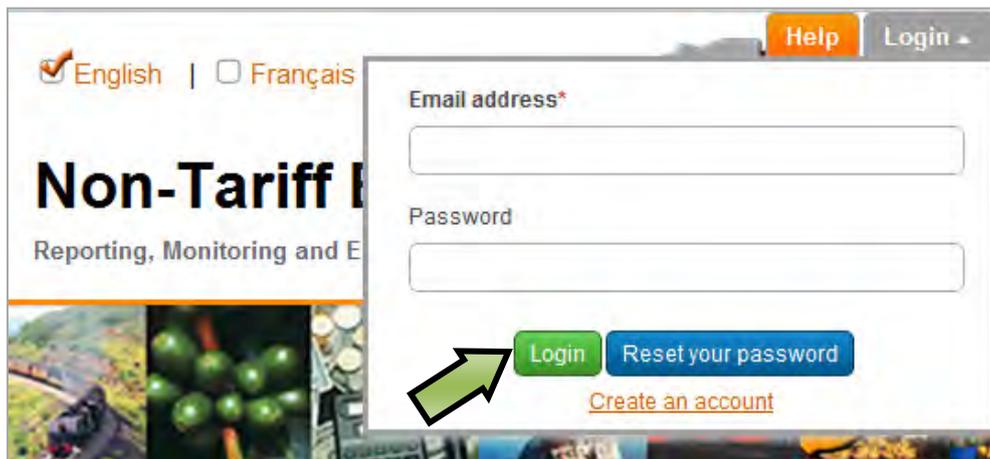
NOTE:

- Fields marked with an asterisk (*) are compulsory.
- Users must activate their accounts by clicking on the activation link sent to their email address when registering.
- Users will not be able to log into the website unless their account has been activated.

4.3 How to log in if you have already registered

To log into the NTB website:

1. Open the website in a browser.
2. Click on the “**Login**” button (located at the TOP RIGHT of the screen).



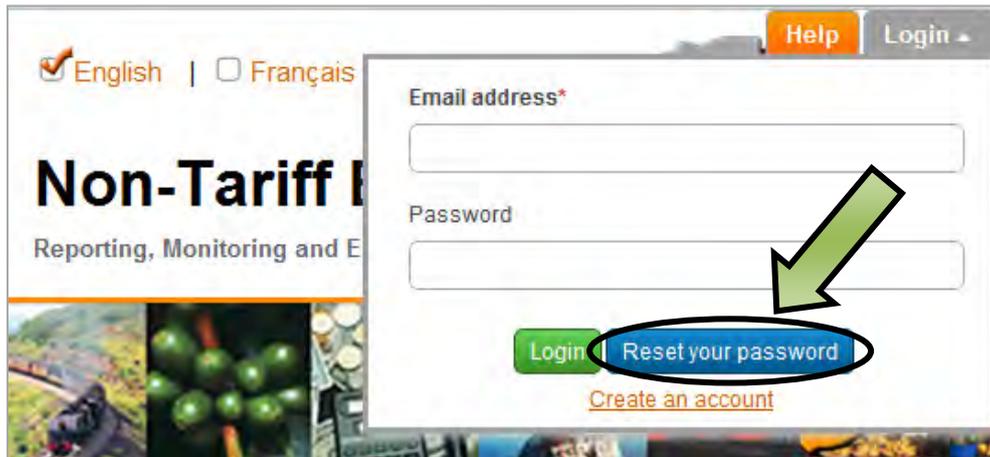
3. Fill in your email address and password. Then click on “**Login**”
4. Once logged in, the login button and form is no longer visible, and a “**Logout**” button appears at the TOP RIGHT of the screen
5. Click “**Logout**” to end your session



4.4 How to reset your password

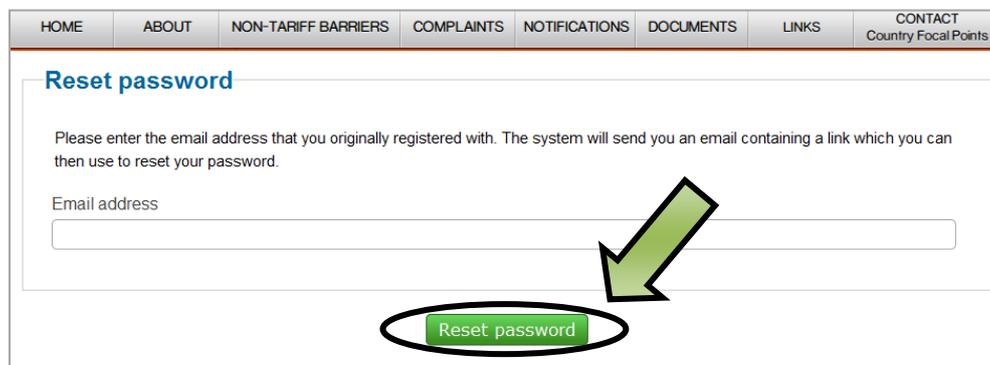
To reset your password:

1. Open the website in a browser
2. Click on the “**Login**” button (located at the TOP RIGHT of the screen), followed by the blue “**Reset your password**” button, at the bottom of the login form:



The screenshot shows the top right corner of the website. There are links for 'English' (checked) and 'Français'. Below this is the title 'Non-Tariff Barriers Reporting, Monitoring and Elimination Mechanism'. The login form contains two input fields: 'Email address*' and 'Password'. At the bottom of the form are three buttons: a green 'Login' button, a blue 'Reset your password' button (circled in black), and an orange 'Create an account' link. A green arrow points to the 'Reset your password' button.

3. The **Reset password** form will open:



The screenshot shows the 'Reset password' form. At the top is a navigation bar with links: HOME, ABOUT, NON-TARIFF BARRIERS, COMPLAINTS, NOTIFICATIONS, DOCUMENTS, LINKS, and CONTACT (Country Focal Points). The main heading is 'Reset password'. Below the heading is a paragraph: 'Please enter the email address that you originally registered with. The system will send you an email containing a link which you can then use to reset your password.' There is an 'Email address' input field. At the bottom is a green 'Reset password' button, which is circled in black. A green arrow points to the button.

4. Enter your email address, and click on “**Reset password**”.
5. The system will email a once-off password reset link. Click on the link in this email to reset your password
6. The link opens a form where you can create a new password. Enter your new password in both fields, and then click “**Change password**”.
7. You will now be able to login using your new password

5 Submitting and tracking complaints

All registered users are able to submit and track complaints via the NTB website. Unique reference numbers are assigned to complaints by the system automatically, on submission.

5.1 How to submit a complaint

To submit a new complaint using a web interface:

1. Log onto the website, using your email address and password
2. Go to **Complaints** in the main menu and then click on **Register a complaint** in the dropdown menu below it:



3. Complete the form on the page that opens by providing as much detail as possible about the complaint. Once all the information is complete, click the **“Submit your complaint”** button.

NOTE:

- You will be prompted to review your profile details and to make changes if necessary
- All fields marked with an asterisk (*) are compulsory and must be completed.

5.2 File uploads

Supporting documents can be uploaded as part of the registration of a complaint.

To upload a file:

1. Click on “**Browse**”, then locate the file on your computer
2. Select the file, and click on “**Open**”
3. Provide a description of the file
4. To add additional files, click on “**Add another file**” and repeat the process
5. Files added incorrectly to the form can be removed by clicking on “**Remove file**”
6. Files are uploaded and saved when the “Submit your complaint” button is clicked.

5.3 How to track a complaint

Users can track the status of complaints which they have submitted using the NTB website.

To track a complaint:

1. Log into the website, using your email address and password
2. Go to the **Your account** menu at the TOP LEFT of the screen and then click on **Complaints you have registered**:



3. This displays a list of all the complaints you have submitted

To search for a complaint in the list:

1. To search for specific complaints, use any of the following search criteria:
 - a. Enter search terms in the **General Search** field
OR
 - b. Sort the "Complaint number" and "Date of incident" columns by clicking on the **column headers**
OR
 - c. **Filter** the remaining columns (NTB Type, Location, Reporting country and Status) by clicking on the filter icon and selecting certain conditions:
2. Click the blue **"View"** button to see the specific complaint

General Search:
Searches all complaint based on search terms provided

Filter:
See instructions in the next example

Sort:
Click on the column headers to sort listed complaints.
E.g. Clicking on the 'Date of incident' header will sort the complaints according to date in *ascending* order. Clicking the header again will sort the dates in *descending* order.

2. Click here to view more about this complaint

Complaint number	NTB Type	Date of incident	Location	Reporting country	Status	Actions
NTB 460	6.1. Prior import deposits and subsidies	2018-06	Botswana: BURS	Botswana	New	View
<p>Complaint: Botswana BURS requires a deposit to be lodged with... prior to allowing any goods, being imported into... all deposit - enough to cover... The only way to avoid paying... determined as owing that ve... particularly if you don't stay in Gaborone where most of the... incurred by the importer and can result in goods being... all consignments, where the VAT owed is only a few... to Gaborone, at the right time (which often changes) in order</p>						
NTB 458		08	Botswana: Martins Drift	Botswana	New	View

Complaint: time taken to clear both side, high cost of paid to clearing agents both sides and attitude of Botswana customs officials is a serious concern and a major NTB. What you encounter at borders is inconsistent and contradicts what the government preaches in relation to SMME development.

Example of the Complaint listing

Your Complaints

5 in total

Complaint number	NTB Type	Date of	Location	Reporting	Status	Actions
NTB-000-460	6.1. Prior import deposits and subsidies					View
<p>Complaint: Botswana BURS requires a deposit to be lodged v... returned to South Africa at the importers expense... hundred Pula, more money can be spent on trying to get to...</p>						
NTB-000-458	2.8. Lengthy and costly procedures		Botswana: Martins Drift	Botswana	New	View
<p>Complaint: time taken to clear both side, high cost of paid to clearing agents both sides and attitude of Botswana customs officials is a seriuos concern and a mojr NTB. What you encounter at borders is inconsistant and contradicts what the government preaches in relation to SMME development.</p>						

2 Select the conditions you want to search on. E.g. selecting "Resolved" will search for listed complaints that has been resolved.

3 Click on "Apply Search"

2. Click here to view more about this complaint

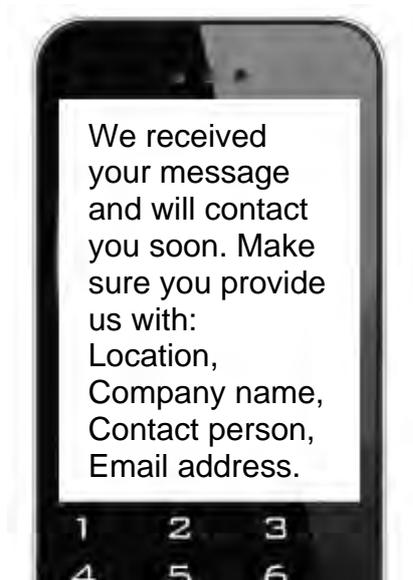
Example of search using filters

6 Sending a complaint via SMS/Text message

1. Type the details of your complaint in a new **SMS/text message** on your mobile phone
2. Make sure you have the following information in your message:
 - **Location** of the incident
 - Your **company's name**
 - The name of a **contact person** at your company
 - **Email address** of a contact person
3. Send your message to the following number:

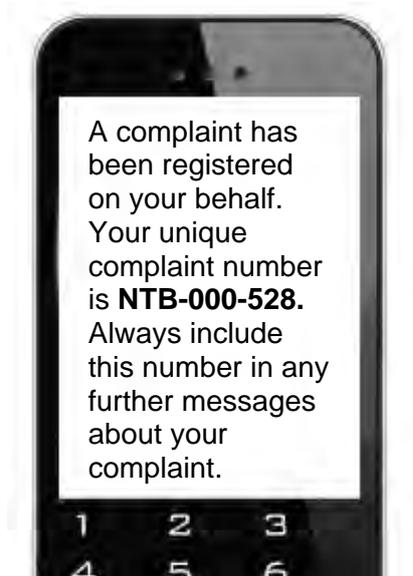
+27 72 949 2093

4. The system will send you a message back confirming that your complaint was received and reminding you to provide the following information:

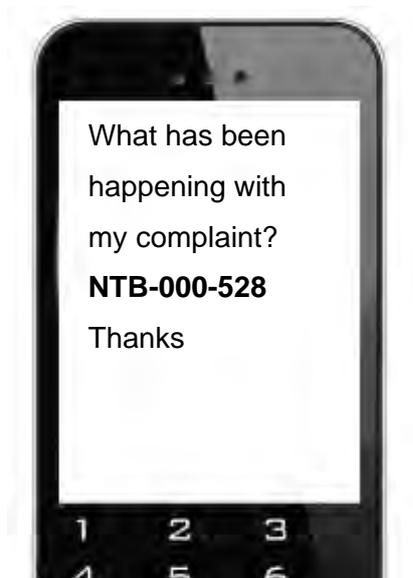


5. An assigned Focal Point or system Administrator will be notified of your message.
6. They will send you follow-up questions if necessary to find out more about your complaint.
7. **Answer their questions by simply replying to their messages and pressing 'Send'.**

8. Once they have enough information, they will **submit an NTB complaint on your behalf.**
9. The system will send you a message with your **complaint's NTB number:**



10. When sending any more messages about this complaint, always add your **complaint number** to it, for example :



7 Your user profile

7.1 How to edit your user profile

All registered users can log into the website and edit their own user profiles.

To edit your profile on the website:

1. Log into the website, using your email address and password
2. Go to the **Your account** menu at the TOP LEFT of the screen and then click on **Edit your details**:



"Your account" menu

Edit your details

Clicking here allows the user to update his/her profile details:

- Email address
- First name and Last name
- Country
- Contact details (telephone, cell phone/mobile and fax)
- Sector
- Language preference

Change your password

This allows users to change their passwords.

NOTE:

- Before submitting complaints, users are able to review the information contained in their profile, and make changes if necessary.

8 Support

Please do not hesitate to contact TradeMark Southern Africa if you need any assistance in using this website.



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