



MP 9.7 COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS MANAGEMENT

Revisions

Rev	Changes	Date
Ed. 1 Rev. 1	Added a new way to report appeals (portal)	27.02.2024
Ed. 1 Rev. 0	Company name change	13.12.2023
2	Harmonization to scope expansion accreditation and general revision	12.12.2022
1	Removed complaints and appeals/objection committee external	11.02.2022
0	First issue	20.07.2021

1. SCOPE

This procedure provides an objective and transparent approach to registration, examination and decision-making related to complaints and appeals of the certification body.

2. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Appeal: a written request expressed by the applicant for certification or certified organization review of any adverse decision made by the certification body associated with the desired certification.

Appeals can be submitted on denial or revocation of a certificate, refusal to consider an application for certification or decisions terminating the certification.

Complaint: any written expression of dissatisfaction, other than an appeal by a person or organization associated with the operation of certification bodies or organizations with certification provided by it to the expected response.

They can be submitted on:

- act or omission of the certification body, its audit team;
- failure to comply with deadlines for carrying out the certification activities;
- contractual terms breach;
- negative opinions and statements of a third party with respect to the certification.

The other terms and definitions are in accordance with:

- ISO 17000:2020;
- ISO 17021-1:2015;
- ISO 9000:2015;
- ISO 10002:2018.

3. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY

The System Manager records every complaint or appeals received in written form by "F 9.7-02 Complaint / appeal", which are recorded in "F 9.7-01 Complaints and appeals records".

There is a proper email address (objections@euro-certifications.com) to keep appeals with the proper level of confidentiality. It is also possible to report the appeal via the dedicated portal.



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The review of the facts and circumstances must not lead to discriminatory actions against sender.

Within 10 days from the registration, the Head of Certification Body has to inform the sender of the admissibility of the complaint / appeal.

The System Manager handles appeals and establishes a capable team (possibly choosing personnel qualified as Lead Auditor) to take charge of appeals. As the team has taken a decision, it is communicated to the System Manager. The team personnel shall be different from that who carried out the audits.

The Head of Certification Body is responsible for all decisions related to the process of handling complaints and appeals, while the System Manager is responsible for handling and communication of complaints and appeals.

If the person involved in the subject of the appeal/complaint coincides with the Head of Certification Body, it is granted opening a non-conformity towards this person.

The process of appeals/complaints management includes at least the following:

- reception and eligibility review;
- examine the facts and circumstances related to the complaint/ appeal;
- decision as to determine the appropriate action based on the results of complaints/appeals of a similar nature;
- tracking and recording documentation of complaints/appeals, including actions undertaken to resolve them.

The certification body actions ensures appropriate corrections and corrective actions on every complaint/ appeal and the complaints/appeals about the certification activities can be related to behaviour of staff.

Depending on the nature of the appeal / complaint, the responsibility of the staff are as follows:

The Head of Certification Body, Certification Manager, Auditor Manager and System Manager review all the appeals/complaints during an extraordinary meeting that has to take place within 10 working days after the reception of the appeal/complaint.

If the appeal/complaint is directed specifically against one of them, that person couldn't participate to the review meeting.

The appeal is then discussed with the staff of the involved process, and if it's necessary, the appeal may be discussed with additional third parties relevant to the nature of the appeal.

The System Manager after collecting information, asks the staff for an explanation.

The complaints / appeals against certified clients are considered in relation to the management and operation of its Certification Manager.

If necessary, may request additional information from the applicant or have recourse to third parties.

Once collected enough information, the certification manager chooses one or both of the following actions:

- check the circumstances of the appeal during the planned audit of the organization;



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- performed an extra audit to the certified organization.

The Certification Manager reviews all the information gathered and he/she makes a proposal to the Head of Certification Body to resolve the appeal/complaint.

The deadline for taking a final decision is 1 month from the end of the audit, during which the Certification Body provides the appellant with progress reports.

The process of handling complaints/appeals is carried out in a way that does not result in any discriminatory actions against the appellant.

The complaints may arise during or in connection with:

- the refusal to consider the application terminated;
- failure to comply with the agreed deadlines;
- lack of transparency in the procedures applied for certification activities;
- suspicion of a conflict of interest;
- the decision for refusal, revocation, suspension of certificate;
- terminating the process of certification of management systems.

The Certification Body reports any valid complaint about a certified client to the certified client in question.

The Certification Body has to officially inform (in written form) the sender of the complaint / appeal, within 7 days from the date of decision, about the result of the appeal.

The Head of Certification Body will discuss with the certified client and the complainant whether and, if so to what extent, the subject of the complaint and its resolution shall be made public.

The complaints and appeals records collect all information about complaints and appeals, including the decision and the team which checked the facts and decision-making and notification to the sender.

The System Manager prepares an annual report with a summary of the relevant year received complaints / appeals stating their number, nature and the decision taken.

The complaints / appeals records are on fundamental input of the management review and all information and records are managed according MP 10.2.3 Management of documents and records.