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APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

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APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

1. Purpose

To make a procedure for handling appeals and complaints from the client.

2. Scope

All kinds of appeal and complaint that comes under the scope of FSMS/HACCP.

This procedure shall be applicable to all appeals and complaints received by CQC in relation to the certification and related services offered by CQC.

3. References

ISO 17021-1:2015 - Clause 9.7 & 9.8 requirements.

4. Definitions

Appeal: An appeal is a plea / request preferred by a client of CQC to the highest decision-making committee seeking a resolution on decisions made while the handling of a compliant or dispute or a plea on a certification decision made by CQC.

Complaint: A complaint means where a client or other interested / affected parties, either in written and or verbal, identifying an unsatisfactory service and conduct of CQC auditor(s).

5. Responsibility

- 1) Recording Appeals & compliant – Certification Coordinator
- 2) Analysis of appeals and complaints – Management Representative
- 3) Review & Approval of Decision – Certification Manager

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6. Appeal Procedure

Comply Quality & Standardization Certificates Issuing Services (CQC) has an appeal-handling process to enable its clients to appeal against the decision which does not result into acceptable resolution or where the proposed procedure is unacceptable to the appellant or other parties involved.

This appeals-handling process shall provide for an independent and impartial appeal process. Any client can submit an appeal against the decisions taken by CQC.

The appeal is only received through email or printed format by post. CQC provides an option for the appellant to access its appeal-handling process through website or printed media.

It is also making sure that the personnel involved in the appeals-handling process are different from those who carried out the audits and made the certification decisions thereby maintaining its policy of impartiality.

CQC will not take any discriminatory actions against the appellant for submitting the appeal.

The procedure for appeal is as follows:

- 1) Client subject to the regulations who believe that they are adversely affected by a noncompliance or certification decision may appeal such decision to Certification Manager or the Managing Director of CQC. In case if the director of CQC is involved in the certification decision of the organization which is appealing, then he/she will give the responsibility for handling appeal to the Quality Assurance Department. If still the person making the appeal did not satisfied, then he/she can also appeal to the Director of EIAC.
- 2) All written communications between parties involved in appeal proceedings must be sent to the recipient's place of business by a delivery service which provides dated return receipts.
- 3) A client can appeal within 30 days of receiving the decision letter from CQC, or within the time frame specified in that letter, whichever is later. Unless the appeal is timely, the decision to deny, revoke, or suspend the client's certification will become final.
- 4) CQC informs the certified client in writing of the suspension or withdrawal and the reasons for the suspension or withdrawal. The certified client will have the right to appeal to the CQC. No certification will be suspended or withdrawn unless CQC has:
 - a) Served at least three weeks' written notice to the certified client, from the date of notification, stating the grounds for the suspension or withdrawal

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- b) Considered any written appeal from the certified client received during these two weeks.
 - c) If no respond in this time, then a next written notice of 2 weeks is issued to the certified client, from the date of notification.
 - d) A last notice of 1 week is issued if the client does not respond to the previous notices.
- 5) Client must include the following information in their appeal:
- a) A copy of the decision they are appealing,
 - b) A statement of their reasons for believing that the decision was not proper or did not follow the required standards,
 - c) CQC will keep a record of all appeals, take appropriate follow up actions, and document the action taken.
 - d) Appeals may be made to the CQC Director.
 - e) If the Director was involved in the decisions being appealed, the Director will handle the appeal.
- 6) When a written appeal has been received, the CQC will convene an appeal meeting chaired by Director, CQC and comprising of members not involved in the evaluation of the certified client to consider the explanations given, and if the certified client so wishes, will provide an opportunity for the certified client body to be heard as soon as possible. Appropriate technical experts may be co-opted to assist in hearing the appeal, where necessary.
- 7) The corrective actions taken by the client will also be verified for their effectiveness and A description of the appeals handling process is publicly accessible (On website www.complycertification.com)

7. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Complaints represent a source of information as to possible nonconformity. A complaint can be made by any person or body against the following:

- a. CQC, its operation and/or procedures
- b. the auditors, reviewers, committee members, staff of the CQC
- c. certified client
- d. misuse of Accreditation or certification status either in scope or in use of the logo or mark.

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8. RECEIVING, VALIDATING & RECORDING OF COMPLAINTS

1. The complaints can be received on our website, through e-mail, by post, by hand or by any other possible means of communication and it can be done by any person; including our client, any stake holders, a person other than clients, client's customers, or any other person; related the scope of FSMS/HACCP.
2. Upon receipt of a complaint, the CQC confirms whether the complaint relates to certification activities that it is responsible for and, if so, shall deal with it. If the complaint relates to a certified client, then examination of the complaints shall consider the effectiveness of the certified management system.
3. Any valid complaint about a certified client will also be referred by the certification body to the certified client in question at an appropriate time, which can be a week to three weeks, depending on the severity of the complaint.
4. Complaints or appeals received from any party on all other matters will be handled by the CQC Director. Cases involving certification requirements of they may be referred to one or more reviewers for additional evaluation. Those reviewers will not have been involved in earlier review or audit of the contested case. Cases involving certification decisions of other certification agencies will be referred to those agencies. All other matters will be investigated and decided by the Director who will determine appropriate subsequent action. After receiving the complaints CQ will be responsible for gathering and verifying all necessary information to validate the complaint.

A notice of suspension will include the following information:

1. A certified operation whose certification has been suspended under this section may at any time, unless otherwise stated in the notification of suspension, submit a request to the applicable Regulatory Authority for reinstatement of its certification. The request must be accompanied by evidence demonstrating correction of each noncompliance and corrective actions taken to comply with and remain in compliance with the regulations. A notice of termination will include the following information:
2. A certified operation or a person responsibly connected with an operation whose certification has been terminated will be ineligible to receive certification for a period of 1 year following the date of such termination. CQC will inform applicable Regulatory Authority in such case.

The Appeal and Complaints handling committee are constituted on need basis and is authorised by the certification manger to investigate any appeal or complaints within its terms of reference.

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Appeal and Complaints handling committee is authorised to seek any relevant information it requires from any member of staff of CQC or any relevant third parties, and all members of CQC are directed to co-operate with any reasonable request made by the Appeal and Complaints handling committee.

The Committee must adhere to the relevant standards, accreditation criteria and ISO 17021-1:2015 and CQC procedures.

The Committee is authorised by the Certification Manager to obtain guidance, if it considers it appropriate to obtain legal or other independent professional advice and, if it considers necessary, to secure the advice or attention of those with relevant experience.

9. QUALITY RECORDS

Quality Record Number	Quality Record Title	Retention Time
CQ-F9-01	Appeal & Complaints Register	Six Years