

Revisions

Revision	Changes	Date

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.

This procedure determines the orders to take effective follow-up of received complaints and appeals and resolving them and informing the interested parties.

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/IEC 17000:2020;
- UNI EN ISO / IEC 17021-1:2015;
- UNI EN ISO 9000:2015;
- ISO 10002:2018.

3. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY

The certification body records every complaint or appeals received in written form and the complaints / appeals are recorded in the records F 9.7-01 Complaints and appeals records and form F 9.7-02 Complaint / appeal.

The review of the facts and circumstances is done in order not to 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 head of the certification body is responsible for all decisions related to the process of handling complaints and appeals, while the system manager is responsible for the handling and communication of complaints and appeals.

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

- reception and record;
- 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 documentation of complaints/appeals.

The certification body actions should ensure appropriate corrective actions on every complaint/ appeal and the complaints/appeals about the certification activities can be related to behavior of staff. Depending on the nature of the appeal, the responsibility of the staff and committees are as follows:

- The Committee's impartiality reviews appeals against:
 - the Head of the certification body;
 - the system manager;
 - another competent person employed to the Certification Body;
 - the overall activity;
 - policy.
- The auditor manager reviews appeals against the action of:
 - auditors
 - technical experts
 - veto auditors
- The certification manager reviews appeals with negative outcome or negative opinion of a third party with a certificate issued.

The appeal is 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 committee after collecting information ask the internal staff for an explanation.

The appeals against certified organizations 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 more of the following actions:

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

The deadline for making a final decision is 1 month from the audit end.

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 complaints are considered by the committee for the objections whose composition is determined by the Head of the certification body.

The committee for impartiality and the committee for objections include people with proper competence in the field of certification of management systems and / or legal competences and they are independent from the certification body and they can make competent, objective and independent decisions.

To ensure objectivity and impartiality in resolving issues, the committee members sign the F 5.2-04 declaration of independence, impartiality and preservation of professional secrecy.

The complaints has to be sent to the committee of the objections within 14 days from the notification of the decision against which complaints after that the Committee for the objections must organize a meeting with the certification body within 14 days.

The members of the committee receive specific documentation on which the complaint is opened and the documentation have to clarify the facts.

After that the committee of objections decides with a simple votation of majority how to procede and it fill the F 9.7-02 Complaint within 1 month.

The certification body has to inform officially (in writing) the sender of the complaint / appeal within 7 days from the date the decision.

The Head of the certification body will discusses with the client about the complainant / appeal if the decision is public and before it is published.

The F 9.7-01 Complaints and appeals records collects 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.