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Procedure on Complaint & Appeals

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to describe handling of complaint and appeals received from the client, in house and from other stakeholders.

2. Scope

This procedure is applicable to all types of complaints and appeals received by REPL.

3. Responsibility

Functional Head, Technical Manager (TM)

4. Terms and Definitions

Complaints

Complaints are incidents of grievance or dissatisfaction with REPL. Complaints may be internal in nature or external in nature raised by client, suppliers or other affiliated organizations or complaints raised by client's customers or stake holders.

Appeals

REPL recognizes that the client may have some reservations or may not agree with the conduct of auditor, evaluation findings, certification committee decision and/ or overall interaction with REPL staff. Client is free to communicate the same to REPL Appeal committee and this is treated as an appeal from the client.

5. Procedure

Receipt of complaint /Appeal

- 1. Complaints/Appeals received are recorded in Complaint/Appeal Register (CRM/F65/01/01).
- 2. The complaint/appeal is assigned to concerned manager/head and one validates whether the complaint relates to certification activities for which it is responsible. If no then concerned manager/head will reject the complaint/appeal and the complainant/appellant is informed regarding the same. Else, concerned manager/head initiates investigation and decides actions to be taken to resolve the complaint/appeal.
- 3. Correction and corrective actions are recorded into complaint/appeal analysis form (CRM/F65/01/02).
- 4. REPL ensures that any discriminatory actions should not result during investigation and decisions taken. This is ensured by reviewing by a senior official who was not involved in certification activity and the same shall be communicated to the complainant/ appellant.
- 5. In case of Commercial complaint, the same shall be resolved by the concerned manager/head in consultation with accounts department. The complainant will be intimated accordingly.

The complainant/ appellant is informed regarding the action taken or action to be taken against their complaint/appeal received. Whenever possible, REPL give formal notice of the end of the complaint/appeal handling process to the complainant/appellant.

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If required, REPL follows up with the client for the response. Depending on the response, may decide to;

- Write to the complainant/appellant about the response and asks for his response.
- Ask further clarification from the client
- Depute an evaluator to personally visit the client and investigate for failure. Such visit shall be considered as special visit and may be charged to client.
- Request a joint meeting with client and complainant/appellant.

If the complaint/appeal is justified then REPL shall compensate the damage(s) caused from the certificate holder as per the relevant clause of the contract.

REPL shall determine the requirement for sharing the subject and the resolution of the complaint/appeal publicly after prior discussion with the complainant/appellant and the certified client.

The outcome of the respective complaints/appeals shall be discussed in the following management review meeting for effectiveness of corrective / preventive action taken.

Causes of complaints/appeals is analysed as part of management review so that common causes can be identified and appropriate action taken to minimise such complaints/appeals in future & for continual improvement.

If any interested party requests for the process of handling complaints and appeals, REPL shall request the same in writing along with their purpose and then the procedure as listed and followed as per CRM/P65/01 shall be made available to them.

6. References

- ISO 17065:2012(E), Clause No: 7.13
- Quality Manual Section: 7.0

7. Records

Sr. No	Document Description	Document Number
1.	Client Complaint/Appeal Register (Feedback)	CRM/F65/01/01
2.	Client Complaint / Appeal Analysis Form	CRM/F65/01/02