



Procedure for Complaints and Appeals

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to describe the process to receive, evaluate and make decisions on complaints and appeals.

2. Scope

- This document is applicable to complaints on the EISPL personnel and services; on certified client; and on appeals to the EISPL.
- This document does not apply to disputes referred for resolution outside the organization or for employment-related disputes.

3. Responsibilities

- The Director is responsible for
 - appointing the investigation officer for the received and registered complaints;
 - identifying and deciding course of actions (both corrective and preventive);
 - to determine on course of actions recommended by designated complaint investigating officer;
 - allocating resources, as required for completing investigation;
 - intimating the complainant of the status of course of actions through Scheme Manager (Food), if he/she is not involved, for 1st line resolution on appeals.
- The Quality Manager, is responsible for
 - maintenance of complaint list in the DMS portal;
 - coordination and first-hand contact for complaints;
 - monthly reporting of complaints of summary to the Director.
 - coordination with complainant.
- Investigation officer is responsible for:
 - conducting investigation,
 - root cause analysis,
 - recommendation.
- Appeals Committee is responsible for 2nd line of resolution of appeals.

Note: - Person(s) who is part of the complaint or cause of the complaint, he/she is not be allowed to participate in complaint handling process, i.e., persons engaged in the complaint-handling process are different from those who carried out the audits and made the certification decisions.

4. Description

4.1 General

- The complaint is received by mail (info@eurocert.in), or in the EISPL website (Eurocert Asia).
- If complaint is related to EISPL is added to complaint list in the DMS.
- The complainant is updated throughout the complaint handling process.
- The process is subject to keeping the confidentiality requirements.

- Complaints and appeals to be available for assessment team of the Accreditation Board.
- Complaints and appeals to be reviewed during the Management Review, to indicate the weaknesses.
- These are form a part of corrective actions for process improvement.
- No discriminatory actions against to be taken on the complainant or appellant.
- This procedure is publicly accessible at the website of the EISPL (www.eurocert.in).

4.2 Processing of complaints about EISPL personnel and services

- On receiving a complaint, the relevant details are recorded at 'Manage Compliant' within 'Organisation' menu of the DMS portal within 1 day of receipt of complaint.
- Based on the appraisal of the complaint details, an investigation officer (IO) is designated within 3 days.
- Resources, if required to carry out are the investigation are allocated to the IO.
- The investigation to establish a trail of events using following methods:
 - identify the cause of the problem;
 - gather all necessary information for verifying the chain of events;
 - record of statements of the EISPL personnel (the subject of complaint);
 - record of statements of complainants.
- The IO to find out the root-cause of the complaint within minimum possible time.
- No deadline is fixed for completing investigation, considering that a transparent and fair investigation may require detailed analysis of various issues.
- Upon completion of investigation, IO upload submit report to the Director.
- The Director have discretionary power to accept and implement recommendations in to or in partial.
- Approved recommendations form the basis for course of redressal and future course of preventive actions.
- Root cause accepted, correction and corrective action is recorded in the DMS portal 'Manage Compliant' within 'Organisation' menu).
- Intimate the complainant action taken (or to be taken) to resolve the grievance.
- Inform the complainant, that there is provision to appeal, if not satisfied resolution of their grievance.

4.3 Processing of complaints on certified clients

- On receiving a complaint, the relevant details are recorded at 'Manage Compliant' within 'Organisation' menu of the DMS portal within 1 day of receipt of complaint.
- The Director reviews the significance of complaint and then appoints a Investigation Officer
- The method and resources allocated to the investigation is left to the discretion of Director.
- The certified client which is the subject of a complaint, may be informed about the complaint and the outcome of the investigation.
- Degree and type of information given to a third-party is governed by policy of the EISPL relating to confidentiality.
- Identity of the complainant is not be disclosed without permission of the complainant.
- Once required action has been implemented, the complaint list in the DMS portal is updated on root cause accepted, correction and corrective action.

- Intimate the complainant action taken (or to be taken) to resolve the grievance.
- Inform the complainant, that there is provision to appeal, if not satisfied resolution of their grievance.
- The continuity of the effectiveness of the food safety management system of the certified client in question to be verified.

4.4 Corrective and preventative actions

- Corrective and preventive actions pertaining to complaints include:
 - counselling of the concerned person(s);
 - training, calibration of all personnel involved in audit and other certification activities;
 - allocate resources to bring improvement;
 - imposing fines
 - suspension and withdrawal of certificate, in case of certified clients;

4.5 Processing of appeals

- If the complainants disagree with decision or unsatisfied with the resolution of their grievance, they are entitled to appeal within 14 days of intimation of outcome of complaint investigation process.
- The appeal can be made through e-mail.
- Upon receiving of appeal, it is required to be recorded with unique number identification and an acknowledgement is required to be sent to the appellant.
- A preliminary review is required to be conducted to confirm the validity of the appeal.
- The client shall be guided by Quality Manager on the process of appeal.
- Every appeal is required to be investigated and intimated to the appellant within 30 calendar days.
- An interim progress report is required to be sent to the appellant, if investigation take more than 30 days.
- While taking action, it is required to take into account the result of any previous similar appeals.
- Recurring issues or serious issues related to the FSMS system shall trigger the requirement for correction, root cause analysis and corrective action to prevent the recurrence as per the documented procedure.
- The Director shall first try to resolve the matter, as 1st line of resolution.
- The appellant shall be apprised about investigation is being taken up on their appeal.
- The outcome of the investigation and decision shall be informed to the appellant by on conclusion of investigation.
- If the outcome of this first line resolution (or review), still be unacceptable to the appellant, they have recourse to the appeals for 2nd line of resolution.
- When the appellant files for re-appeal, the Director shall refer the matter to Appeals Committee.
- Appeals Committee is constituted in accordance to rules given below:
 - A Committee is appointed to hear the appeal for 2nd line of resolution.
 - The Committee comprise of a chairperson and two members.
 - No persons having any interest or direct association with the subject of the appeal or have been involved with the related audit or certification process, is not to be appointed as member or chairperson of the Appeal Committee.
 - The appellant is informed about composition of the appeal committee immediately.

- The appellant can have the right to object inclusion of any member including chairperson in the constituted committee. Such objections shall be communicated within three days to the EISPL.
- In event of objection from the appellant on inclusion of any member including chairperson in the constituted committee, a new committee is formed immediately.

- The appeal committee shall meet immediately after issue of notification of the constitution.
- The committee shall inform the appellant about venue, date and time of hearing and shall give reasonable time to the appellant to appear and respondent(s).
- The decision of the committee is based on the majority of the committee and the Chairman shall declare the decision within 3 days.
- The decision is not binding on the appellant, and if not satisfied, can approach the Accreditation Body for review.
- The EISPL is required to take corrective action as outlined in this procedure.
- The EISPL provide resources for organizing meeting and appeals investigation shall arranged by the Quality Manager.
- The following are rules for appeal cost:
 - The EISPL reserves the right to charge the Appellant, reasonable costs for this second line of independent appeals resolution through invoicing as defined in paragraphs
 - Levy of charges to be notified in advance at the time of second line resolution and may be charged to the appellant ahead of any review commencing.
 - Approval of the Director to be obtained on the charges to be invoiced.
- Under no circumstances, the EISPL or its employees or agents be liable for any losses or damages, except where costs arise as a result of the gross negligence or wilful default of such persons.

5. Records

- Complaint list in DMS portal

6. Reference

- The Quality Manual (EISPL/FD/QM-01)
- The web site of Eurocert Asia
- ISO 10002:2018, Quality management – Customer satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling
