

Procedure: Handling of Appeals

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This procedure describes how to deal with the Appeals.

2.0 Objective

2.1 Objective of this procedure is to give an opportunity to the appellant to formally request that an official decision is reviewed and if necessary reverse/revise the decision.

3.0 References

3.1 MSM Sec 22.0

4.0 Responsibility

4.1 Vexil is responsible for all decisions at all levels of the appeal-handling process including gathering and verifying all necessary information to validate the appeal. Managing Director/Director oversee the appeal-handling process.

4.2 Appeal committee - to investigate and decide time frame and methodology for dealing with the issue.

5.0 Process

5.1 Non-resolution of the complaint regarding Vexil certification services (Refer P2201), to the satisfaction of the complainant, an appeal can be filed within a period of 30 days from the issue of final closure letter of the complaint. Upon receipt of the appeal, an acknowledgement shall be sent to the appellant.

5.2 On receipt such appeals will be forwarded to the TAC Chairman shall appoint a member of TAC as head of appeals committee. The nominated head shall constitute the appeals committee as described in para 5.3 below.

5.3 The nominated head of the Appeals committee can take two members from the assessors, staff or experts of the TAC as permanent members and can also invite other outside members as necessary to discharge the appeal. In case of any outside members associated with the appeals committee, a confidentiality Statement shall be taken on form (F1903A). It shall be ensured that persons engaged in the appeals handling process are different from those who carried out the audits and made the certification decisions.

Note 1: The appeals committee may request for detailed information on the issues as supported by the documentary evidence, including details of action taken by the parties involved in the complaint.

Note 2: If the appeals committee has representatives from one or more certified organizations, those members shall not have a significant influence on decision making – this shall be ensured by counting all such representatives' votes as only one vote.

5.4 The appeals committee, during the review and investigation, may ask the appellant to present the facts in person, if necessary or if so desired by the appellant. The appeals committee shall also take into consideration the results of previous and similar appeals. The tracking and recording of the appeals, including actions undertaken, shall be done on F2201 & F2202.

5.5 The appellant shall be kept abreast of progress on the appeal.

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5.6 The appeals committee will give its recommendation to the Chairman of TAC for necessary action to discharge the appeal to the satisfaction of the appellant and regarding corrective actions, if any, that can be taken to avoid reoccurrence. The Chairman TAC will give the decision on the appeal based on the recommendation of the appeals committee. The decision of the Chairman TAC will be final.

5.7 Vexil shall give formal notice of the end of the appeal-handling process to the complainant.

5.8 All records related to a appeal shall be compiled and filed together. If this involves email or soft copies of documents/ correspondence, the same shall be preserved in electronic media in a separate folder with appeal number as the name of the folder.

5.9 Any corrective actions taken on the findings of appeal process as recommended, shall be taken and followed up for effectiveness.

5.10 It is ensured that impartiality to appellant is not compromised whatsoever by Vexil.

5.11 It shall be ensured that submission, investigation and decision on appeals shall not result in any discriminatory actions against the appellant.

6.0 Records

6.1 Complaint/Appeal Log (F2201)

6.2 Complaint/Appeal investigation form (F2202)

6.3 Confidentiality Statement (F1903A)

6.4 Communications file with the appellant & Appeals Committee